

California Children and Families Commission
Highlights of the February 14-15, 2002, Commission Meeting/Planning Session

In lieu of the normal one-day business meeting of the State Commission, the February meeting was held as a special two-day meeting and planning retreat. The morning of February 14 was dedicated to business issues and panel presentations, and the remaining day and half was devoted to planning and priority setting for future investments.

DAY ONE: FEBRUARY 14, 2002

Item 1 – Call to Order: 9:00am

Item 2 - Roll Call - ACTION

Present: Chairman Rob Reiner, Commissioners Kim Belshé, Elizabeth Grossman, Sandra Gutierrez, and Lou Vismara. Commissioner Karen Hill-Scott arrived later and joined the meeting in progress. Absent: Ex-officio members Theresa Garcia and Glen Rosselli.

Chairman Reiner announced that he recently testified on School Readiness before Senator Ted Kennedy's congressional committee in Washington D.C., and that School Readiness is being seen as an important issue at the federal level.

Item 3 - Approval of Minutes - ACTION

The minutes from the January 17, 2002 Commission meeting were approved with the following corrections: 1) Commissioner Grossman was not absent, as she had not yet been sworn in as a Commission member; 2) the meeting started at 9 a.m., not 8:30 a.m.; 3) the discussion of the State Budget as proposed by the Governor for FY 2002-03 also included the Governor's proposal to eliminate the Child Development Policy Advisory Committee (CDPAC) effective January 2003; and 4) Commissioner Belshé, rather than Commissioner Vismara, made the motion to approve Item 10, the Child Development Permit Project. The minutes were then approved unanimously.

Item 4 – Appoint Commission Vice Chair – ACTION

Commissioner Gutierrez nominated Commissioner Belshé, due in part to her experience in state government. Commissioner Vismara seconded. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Item 5 - County Children and Families Commission Policy Panel - Elizabeth Lowe, Neil Kaufman, Sandra McBrayer, Julie Baer, Kathy Long, Dave Kears, Mike Ruane, and Pat Wheatley

A number of issues and funding processes were discussed. Elizabeth Lowe stated that the value of preschool in the life of a child is profound. She believes it is fundamental that all children should have quality preschool and suggested that there should be some sort of child development exposure.

Neil Kaufman's remarks focused on strategies to engage the county commissions early and frequently. He commented that the State and county commissioners are very well coordinated. He suggested to the State Commissioners that if they provide incentives to the counties, projects would be more effective. He asked the Commissioners to think about the roles of the State and the county commissions. He also suggested that legislation should be done by the State Commission; however, the county commissions should be included and asked to provide guidance and wisdom; and likewise, the creating of delivery systems and capacity building should be primarily the role of the county commissions. The State should assist with statewide data collection for the counties.

Sandy McBrayer, a local commissioner from the San Diego County Children and Families Commission, focused on her experience with the County Commission. She stated that they wanted to do things differently, and discussed how we deliver services to children in a new and different way? A key issue is family support: no child lives in a vacuum, and we must support the family. She suggested that the Commission ask about the family support network in place for each project. She urged the Commission to identify the specific regional issues in each county. If we are going to tell the public that we are a partnership, the counties need to show up and participate. For each issue funded, there must be a research and evaluation piece attached to it. We need to tie in our infrastructure to new projects. She said that she has learned so much in Prop 10, but feels as though we have not used our power as county commissioners to stand up to the State, and the Legislature. She concluded that the State and County Commissions must be a partnership and must be coordinated.

Julie Baer, a local commissioner from the Inyo County Children and Families Commission, reported that discussing relationships and coordination between the State and County Commissions is positive. She thanked the State Commissioners for understanding the uniqueness of the rural counties. Her assertion was that there is a need for internal structure and building capacity with community-based organizations (CBOs) in counties like hers. Inyo County has assessed its needs and strengths, and found out the local CBOs did not have the capacity to provide the services. Inyo County does not have adequate transportation; we do not have a Denti-Cal (Medi-Cal) dentist. She concluded by stating her desire to continue to work with the State Commission.

Kathy Long, a local commissioner from the Ventura County Children and Families Commission and representing the county supervisor perspective, stated that she was present to provide experiences from urban counties. 44% of school age children live in poverty. The Neighborhoods for Learning program is providing services to make sure children are ready to learn and ready for school. There are 14 collaboratives involved. They have all initiated parent advisory groups. Each is required to create a neighborhood planning process. The focus is on family support and health needs. The plans address each neighborhood's needs. Another issue that has been identified is the migrant farm workers. Ventura County has the fourth largest agriculture community in California. The school dropout rate for the children of migrant farm workers is 56%. Most of the Neighborhoods for Learning programs are doing outreach efforts into the migrant community. We have had great success with the mental and oral health areas. All of this

is built on the CBOs; some of the services include a mobile dental van, outreach to pregnant women, and oral health prevention programs for children. With the state budget situation as it is, county commissions are always at risk for a shift in funding revenues.

Dave Kears, a local commissioner from the Alameda County Children and Families Commission and representing the county agency perspective, talked about the opportunity Proposition 10 gives California. He stated spending more money the same way it has always been spent will not work. He talked about the importance of leveraging, and gave examples of reinvesting in nurses in public health, offering families health care, paying for dental screenings and early intervention in mental health. He urged the State and county commissions to reach out of the box and spend in different ways, and look to others to help reform the system, or it will never change. There is a real opportunity to make significant changes if we work together.

Michael Ruane, executive director of the Orange County Children and Families Commission, summarized the CCAFA's funding recommendations. He urged the State Commission to be very focused and specific. There are continuing and new investments, as well as rural investments to consider. Family support connects to dealing with children over age five, interventions with juvenile violence. Family support principles should be asset-based. The migrant farm worker issue is a tremendous issue for all counties. Research is another issue that is vital. Home visitation strategies are very important. He suggested a statewide tracking of substance-exposed births, since we don't have an adequate way of tracking this at this time. He thinks that the State Commission's Geographic Information System (GIS) is wonderful and will provide the Counties with a valuable tool. He believes that regional approaches to research should be required, and the Commission needs to focus research effort. He recommended that the State Commission support infrastructure for statewide implementation of a 211-phone line for referral to family support networks. 211 is an initiative that will be the same as 911 is for safety. The Americorps proposal recommended by this panel for State Commission funding is time-sensitive and the time to get involved is now. A pilot project is currently being tested and the hope is to have 200 positions funded statewide. Mr. Ruane also recommended that the State Commission continue to fund children's asthma programs as an awareness and education issue. The state of children's oral health the California is reprehensible. On the issue of informal childcare, Mr. Ruane stated that this how the children are being cared for and there should be a true collaboration between the State and county commissions on this issue.

Pat Wheatley, president of the CCAFA and executive director of the Santa Barbara County Children and Families Commission, wrapped up this panel discussion and assured the State Commission that the county commissions will be building on this effort and these recommendations. She spoke of the need to focus on implementation and evaluation. CCAFA will designate lead people from the counties to communicate with the State for a real partnership.

Chairman Reiner agreed that the only way to make Proposition 10 work is to partner with the county commissions as much as possible to attain the goals of Prop 10.

Collaboration is the key. All children K-12 are being served, but only a miniscule number of children age 0-5 are being served. He spoke of the need to advocate and build our constituency partnerships and start getting buy-in for school readiness. He asked the panel to describe an example of how we can collaborate. Sandra McBrayer responded that the Commission should look to the county commissioners to bring the interested partners to the table. A dialogue needs to take place with other state agencies and between the counties and state. A dialogue is needed, not an exchange of presentations. Chairman Reiner spoke of the importance and need for bringing law enforcement into the dialogue, as well as other state agencies, to forge a large advocacy group for young children.

Item 6 - Investments to Create Positive Outcomes for Children with Disabilities and Other Special Needs - Sonoma State and San Francisco State

Dr. Tony Appalone, from the California Institute on Human Services at Sonoma State University, presented recommendations for State Commission investments and informed the Commission that Sonoma State had developed its recommendations over a year's time. They began by doing a preliminary study by using parent forums and electronic forum across the country. They then held stakeholder forums that were attended half by parents, half by professionals. From these groups they asked for recommendations. They met with the CCAFA and then held a synthesis group meeting. From all of these, they created their draft report, which was available as a handout.

One of the findings was children with disabilities have been excluded from public schools and other services. Between 10 -20 % of children have disabilities or other special needs. It is important to identify children that need services to mitigate secondary effects. Information awareness needs to expand. There are many unidentified children with disabilities and other special needs and there is a need for coordination and integration of services.

Recommendations derived from this process include the following:

- 1) Implement early childhood inclusion resource teams developed through county commissions.
- 2) Support family centers to enable families to better prepare their children with disabilities and other special needs for school.
- 3) Develop and implement a statewide leadership and disability resources network to share successful models and practices.
- 4) Develop and implement a countywide, community-based, early screening and identification program.
- 5) Implement public awareness and education activities that address issues related to children with disabilities and other special needs.

Linda Blong focused on the implementation approach. She suggested the State Commission support model demonstration projects and phased-in approaches integrating three recommendations: inclusion resource teams, family centers, and early screening

and assessment. She also recommended implementing the leadership disabilities resources network through a request for proposal process to ensure service integration.

A mother spoke about her daughter, Angie, who has cerebral palsy, and the positive effects of her inclusion. She spoke about the problems and roadblocks she encountered when trying to put her daughter into daycare. She worked two jobs and had no place to put her. She asked the regional center for help and they provided a list of daycare facilities. She called all of them, but once she informed them of her daughter's disability, no one would take her. She called 30 facilities and no one would accept her. She then used the phone book and called over 50 more facilities and still no one would take her. Finally one community center she had called off the original list, invited her to come in, but they had never dealt with a disabled child. She worried that they would not be able to take care of her daughter due to a lack of experience with disabled children. They hired a one-to-one childcare provider for Angie, and that worked very well. They also brought in an inclusion specialist who trained the one-to-one to better help Angie. Due to all the problems she faced, she now works with the inclusion specialist so others will not have to go through what she did.

Whit Hayslip commented on the opportunity to work in a field he loves and that he has enjoyed rich and rewarding work. He said it was unfortunate that they have not been able to improve in the ways they should. The professionals did not and have not looked into what the families needs are outside of the classroom. Over the last 10 years he has tried to help families get to the resources that are available. If schools are ever to be effective in helping the families reach the resources, they must set up a model to increase access, and make support available to families. He recommended that the State Commission tie these to the school readiness system.

Chairman Reiner asked about the potential cost of these recommendations. Dr. Appalone did not provide a fixed dollar amount, but suggested it might be around \$4-5 million.

Item 7 – Survey of the General Public, Parents, and Opinion Leaders on Early Care and Development – Representatives from Field Research and UCLA

Research demonstrates the influence of early childhood experiences on later learning and functioning. A set of public opinion surveys focused on parent and public views to provide information for developing and advancing a strategic childcare and early education agenda. Surveys were conducted in the Fall of 2001 with about 2,000 members of the general public, 4,800 parents of children age 0 –5 years, and 75 opinion leaders. Mark D'Camilla explained most of the focus was on the parents. The parent survey was done by telephone in different languages. The opinion leader survey was done face to face at their place of employment. Most parents feel that they are doing a good job, but they feel stressed. Parental beliefs and views on childcare and early childhood education is: 93% agree that parents have the strongest influence on development during the first five years but 26% believe that a child's capacity to learn is fixed at birth. The presenters reported strong, across-the-board support for family leave: 91% of parents, 72 % of public and 71% of opinion leaders believe the state should develop a paid family leave program. Parents of young children are engaged in a range

of developmentally supportive behaviors - but frequency reading is less than recommended and varies significantly by educational level of the parent.

Public Comment: Raphael Lopez, Executive Director of the Santa Cruz County Children and Families Commission, asked if the final report would have real breakout data that will clearly define issues and populations. Face to face contact is the best goodwill you can buy.

Item 8 – School Readiness Component of the Legislature’s Master Plan for Education (Pre-K through University) - Commissioner Hill-Scott

Commissioner Hill-Scott informed the Commission about the draft of the School Readiness Component of the Master Plan. In summary, her report included the following recommendations:

- California should have universal preschool for all 3 and 4 year olds.
- Childcare for all children aged 0-3 should be guaranteed by 2010.
- Kindergarten enrollment should be required for all children and full day kindergarten should be phased in.
- Inclusive early learning opportunities for children with disabilities and other special needs should be strengthened and expanded, and developmental screenings should be made available four times in a child’s life before age 5.
- Dual language learning for children in the early grades (English would be one of them) is recommended.
- All existing state and federal childcare and development programs should be combined with early education under the California Department of Education.
- A system of School Readiness Centers that give all families access to an array of essential services to meet children’s developmental needs should be developed.

Public Comment: Donita Stromgren, representing the California Resource and Referral Network, indicated her concerns about the level of frustration parents will feel when redirected to organizations that have the same barriers without more support and funding. Upon her request for clarification about what will be available in two months, the Commission was informed that the Joint Committee now has all the working group reports and will be holding public hearings (the School Readiness hearing is scheduled for March 6), and then travel throughout the state to take public comment; the goal is to complete the full Master Plan by next august. (Note: The Legislature may or may not adopt the recommendations contained in each working group’s report.)

Neil Halfon, from UCLA, suggested that the Commission think about leveraging other sources and develop a leverage strategy. He warned about more research and demonstration projects if any real change is to be seen in less than 10 years. He suggested that we think of system change.

Joyce Hanson, a local commissioner from the Orange County Children and Families Commission, suggested using a delegate network throughout the counties that will

achieve some of the goals being set, and urged the Commission to include mental health and developmental services.

Susan Wilson, Executive Director of the Siskiyou County Children and Families Commission, is concerned that we don't know what the regional centers really do and stated that there does not seem to be enough representation from mental health.

Item 9 – Closed Session

Planning Session

Item 10 – Purpose, Context, and Overview of Planning Session

The Commission convened its planning session by reviewing the purpose and context of a one to three year plan for future investments, beginning fiscal year 2002-2003. Dr. Henderson introduced Cecilia Sandoval, who served as the facilitator for this planning session, noting her relationship with CCFC's Advisory Committee on Diversity and her strategic planning and meeting facilitation background. The stage was set for talking about critical issues areas, leveraging funds to have the greatest effect on high impact/high need areas. The discussion, priorities, and critical issue areas were based in part on what the Commission heard from the policy panels that have presented to the Commission in December, January, and at today's business meeting: Health Care, Informal Child Care, and County Commissions. Additional background information available to Commissioners included the Commission's investments to date and other fiscal information.

Item 11 – Current Investments – Joseph Munso – Discussion

Mr. Munso explained the fiscal information available as background for the planning discussion, including a chart displaying the broad categories in which the Commission's funds are currently invested. A second chart showed the trend for a clear tobacco tax revenue decline over the next four years, as much as 7% per year, based on what can be seen to have occurred over the last few years. For planning purposes, it was estimated that there could be about \$105 million available to invest over the next three years, assuming continued funding of current investments.

Item 12 – Framework for Future Direction and Priority-Setting of State Commission Investments

There was clearly support for maximizing School Readiness as an overarching priority. The recommended framework set forth for looking at potential future investments included the following areas:

- Relationship to the Commission's School Readiness focus
- Reasonable expectation for change
- Communication power
- Data power
- Impact
- Multiplier effect
- No clear existing state responsibility for a high need

- Using incentive/partner strategies, particularly with county commission investments

Commissioners were then asked to prioritize, based on the agreed-on criteria, projects for the next 2-3 years.

Item 13 – Adjourn Day One Planning Session

DAY TWO: FEBRUARY 15, 2002

Item 1 – Call to Order – 9:00 a.m.

Item 2 – Roll Call – ACTION

Present: Chairman Reiner, Vice Chairman Belshé, Commissioner Gutierrez, Commissioner Hill-Scott, Commissioner Vismara and Commissioner Grossman.

Absent: Ex-Officio Members Theresa Garcia and Glen Rosselli

Item 3 – Open Day Two of Planning Session

Item 4 – Future Investment Opportunities

The Commissioners were asked to write on a chart their priorities for State Commission report, and to vote their agreement on priorities written down by their colleagues. The priorities area were:

Pre-Service Provider Training
 System Building of Providers and Caregivers
 Accountability
 Substance Abuse
 Domestic Violence
 Tobacco Cessation
 Developmental Assessments Reporting
 Informal Caregiver - Support, Training, etc.
 Children of Migrant Farm Families
 Oral Health
 Children/Families w/ Disabilities & Special Needs
 Mental Health
 Universal Access to Pre-School
 Access to Childcare
 Immunization Registry
 Prenatal Care

From this exercise, and using the other information available to Commissioners, five areas emerged as the top priorities:

- Informal Caregiver Support
- Children of Migrant Farm Worker Families
- Oral Health

- Children/Families with Other Special Needs
- Mental Health

Commissioners then considered again the Commissions role, and spent time discussing how the five priorities relate to one another. Potential strategies were identified within each of these five priority areas.

Informal Caregiver Support: A specific goal for this area was to improve the quality of informal child care so that all kids can be brought to a standard of School Readiness. Commissioner Gutierrez suggested providing that the Commission provides matching funds to county commissions and work with counties to define areas of need. There is a need for a "snapshot" of the caregiver world. Commissioner Hill-Scott pointed out the need to have quality of training, and suggested that the Commission set standards. Potential partners and barriers were then discussed. Partners could include Community-Based Organizations (CBO's), county commissions, resource and referral agencies, Alternative Payment (AP) program, faith-based organizations, and regional occupational centers. The barriers are lack of information and data, provider identification, provider willingness to participate, and provider isolation.

Children of Migrant Farm Families: Specific goals discussed in this area were to increase number of providers, increase the number of children that are immunized, and improve access to healthcare and quality child care. Quality child care is the primary goal. Suggestions were made to partner with county commissions on projects, such as, matching grants (e.g. Central Valley proposal); fund a "summit" to learn more about existing migrant child care programs and to obtain information through public input sessions in the Central Valley; and to define the scope of the problem before devolving to counties. It was pointed out that relevant data may exist (from Legislative hearings or other forums), but maybe focused more on parents than young children. There is also a need to find out what foundations are doing; for example, the California Endowment has committed \$50 million for primarily health care. The major need for the Commission in this area is clearly access to quality child care.

Oral Health: The overriding goal for this area was to prevent oral health disease. Suggestions included support and evaluate early intervention strategies linked to many services; educate parents on the importance of oral health (media campaign is one strategy); examine policies and regulations that the Commission could help address; provider training and outreach; and advocacy for fluoridation in local water supplies. Commissioner Vismara talked about the new dental varnish, that effectively eliminates cavities, but can only be applied by dentists. Barriers for this are reimbursement rates and provider education. State Commission staff will pull together county commissions, public hospital representatives, and dental association representatives to further discuss this issue.

Children and Families with Disabilities and Other Special Needs: The goal for this priority area is to include children with special needs in traditional childcare with adequate support. Recommendations included building on the Sonoma State report to

explore and invest in a statewide technical assistance/best practices network, and link to existing resources. As recommended in the Sonoma State report, the Commission could fund a number of pilot projects that would look at assessments, screening evaluations, and developing inclusion teams. A suggestion was made to education trainers to build capacity and use the Commissions public awareness capabilities to make providers aware of the training and support available to them. A suggestion was made to explore funding in conjunction with county commissions and School Readiness perhaps by using matching grants.

Mental Health: The goal for this priority area was prevention. This priority was brought forward by Chairman Reiner, who stated that depressed mothers do not attach properly to their infants. This priority could build on infant mental health, and expand on that by targeting mothers. This issue presents an opportunity to supply services to kids that are not in a crisis situation, and move to a preventive level. Reportedly, most of the funding for mental health is for older children in crisis. It was suggested that the Commission dedicate time to have a panel including the heads from Mental and Health services, and other appropriate professionals. Chairman Reiner wants to help the mothers that are depressed because that has the potential to affect the child down the road. Commissioner Vismara stated the doctors are not currently trained to diagnose depressed mothers. Obviously much needs to be learned on this issue.

Public Comment: Regarding the issues of Informal caregiver support, Donita Stromgren from the California Resource and Referral Network pointed out that there are different pools of childcare providers; professional and circumstantial. She urged the Commission to be careful when considering funding training for very short-term providers. Also, with respect to the children of Migrant Farm Families, Ms. Stromgren reported that the Central Valley proposal did not explain the existing collaboration with childcare programs. Genie Chough, from the Health and Human Services Agency commented on the Mental Health priority area. She report that HHSA is committed to mental health and is currently in the information-gathering stage, is talking about doing home visits, and would like to assist in pulling a mental health panel together.

Current Investments: The Commission then discussed its current investments and whether they are meeting the goals of Prop 10. The timeline for Commission funding for most of these projects is close to ending. The specific projects discussed at length were:

- California Health Information Survey (CHIS)
- Health Linkages Project
- Childhood Asthma Project
- Minimum Funding Levels for County Commissions

Timelines were set for future discussion of these items. Health Linkages and County Commission Minimum Funding Levels will be discussed at the Commission's April meeting. The Commission is awaiting the results of the CHIS study this spring and will discuss its continued funding after reviewing that document.

The Commission also discussed its Equity Principles and how best to incorporate them into projects funded prior to their adoption last year, as well as the need to ensure their inclusion in future project investments.

Production of some pieces of the Kit for New Parents in Asian languages was also discussed, and will be part of upcoming media discussions.

Item 5 – Closed Session

Item 6 – Future Direction of Commission’s Public Engagement Activities – DISCUSSION

The Commission discussed the direction to take on its media campaign and possible changes in strategy. Chairman Reiner reported that the current campaign has gotten people to understand the connection between brain development and how parents interact with their child. Prop 10 alone does not bring in enough resources to carry the important messages of early child development as far as they need to go; that is the problem the Commission faces. The Commission has a huge asset in the Kit for New Parents. The results of the policy makers, parents, and public opinion polls were to “get information to parents.” This kit is the most effective advocacy tool the Commission has. The Commission discussed the need to broaden its constituency and to really build the partnerships necessary to ensure resources and outcomes.

Item 7 – Summary and Next Steps - DISCUSSION

- The Commission agreed on five strategic results areas, all of which would increase support of School Readiness:
 - Informal Caregiver Support
 - Children of Migrant Farm Families
 - Oral Health
 - Children/Families with Other Special Needs
 - Mental Health
- Implementation largely through County Commissions will be the most effective strategy, but the Commission will set specific standards and will create incentives.
- More research on informal care providers is needed: who and where are they?
- Children of migrant farm families should be a two-pronged approach: carve out a special area for them in all Commission projects, and focus on improving child care by working with county commissions.
- The Commission will look at integrating its work with other organizations and in conjunction with county commissions.
- Commission staff will find out who is legally authorized to give fluoridation treatments.
- There is a clear need to include children with disabilities and other special needs in all Commission projects and to ensure that the families have the support they need.

- The Commission will fund a number of demonstration projects, perhaps within its School Readiness initiative, including screenings.
- There is a need to obtain more information on mental health to understand the gaps.
- More information will be gathered on the Commission's current investments, including where they fit into the five priority areas identified during this retreat, and those projects will begin to be brought back for discussion in April and May, with a target of making funding decisions in June/July 2002.

Item 8 - Adjournment

Chairman Reiner motioned to adjourn the meeting; Vice Chairman Belshé seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.